[English]

STD Facility in West Bengal

3016. DR. RAMCHANDRA DOME : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the progress of work for installation of STD facilities is not satisfactory under Telecom District of Birbhum in West Bengal;

(b) If so, the reason therefor; and

(c) the time by which the work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Sir, out of 27 stations in District Birbhum, West Bengal, 13 stations have already been provided with STD facility. During 1996-97 seven more stations have been planned to be provided with STD facility.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) All the remaining stations in the District of Birbhum shall be provided with STD facility during 9th five Year Plan subject to availability of funds.

Waiting List for Telephone in Nadia, W. Bengal

3017. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons waiting for telephone connections under Chakdah telephone exchange at Nadia district of West Bengal;

(b) total installed capacity of this exchange;

(c) by when Government propose to provide connections to all the waiting listed persons of Chakdah;

(d) steps taken in this regard;

(e) whether it is a fact that the people of Chakdah demanding local desiring facilities with Kalyani which is nearer to Chakdah;

(f) whether any steps are being taken to fulfil this demand;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The number of persons waiting for telephone connections under Chakdah telephone exchange is 614.

(b) Total installed capacity of this exchange is 1250 lines (C+DOT MBM).

(c) It is proposed to provide connections to all the waiting listed persons of Chakdah during 1997-98.

(d) It is proposed to expand the capacity of Chakdah exchange by 750 lines during 1997-98.

(e) Not to our knowledge.

(f) Does not arise in view of (e).

(g) Does not arise in view of (e).

(h) As per National Charging plan, on the basis of short distance charging area concept, Chakdah falling under Ranaghat SDCA cannot have local call facility with Kalyani which is under Calcutta SDCA.

Licences to Blind Vendors

3018. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to issue licences to blind vendors for vending at the stations and in Railway Bogies of the Central and Western Railway;

(b) if so, whether the procedure for issue of such licences has been finalised; and

(c) if so, the time bound programmes for the issue of such licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). Some representations have been received. However, as per present policy such licences are not issued.

Sharing of Railway Transport

3019. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Transport Policy Committee had fixed the share of Rail traffic to be 72% and that this was accepted by the Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that rail transport is 7 times energy-efficient than road transport and that lesser than 72% rail transport means avoidable oil import and foreign exchange outflow;

(c) if so, details of actual goods traffic during the last three years 72% to traffic and the shortfall between the two and consequent loss of foreign exchange therefor; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rail transport is more than 7 times energy-efficient than road transport. A less than optimum freight carried by rail does mean higher share of load of road transport resulting in more energy consumption and thus higher import bill for oil.